

Learning Objectives for M.P.H. in Social and Behavioral Sciences

Core Curriculum

Upon completing the core curriculum of the M.P.H. program, the student will be able to:

- Demonstrate a knowledge base in the disciplines of biostatistics, chronic and infectious disease epidemiology, health systems, public policy, social and behavioral sciences, and environmental health.
- Apply basic research skills to specific public health problems in both group and individual settings, including the ability to define problems; construct, articulate and test hypotheses; draw conclusions; and communicate findings to a variety of audiences.
- Explain the interrelationships between a multitude of factors that can impact on a public health problem, including scientific, medical, environmental, cultural, social, behavioral, economic, political, and ethical factors.
- Review, critique, and evaluate public health reports and research articles.
- Apply public health concepts, principles, and methodologies obtained through formal course work to actual problems experienced in the community or work environment.
- Critically evaluate programs, interventions, and outcomes that relate to public health practice.
- Apply ethical standards and professional values as they relate to the practice of public health.
- Demonstrate sensitivity to the social context within which public health professionals practice.

Social and Behavioral Sciences

Upon receiving an M.P.H. degree with a concentration in Social and Behavioral Sciences, the student will be able to:

- Identify the effects of social, psychological, and behavioral factors on individual and population health, including prevention, treatment and management of chronic disease, adjustment to illness, adherence to treatment regimens, and promotion of recovery.
- Analyze health from multiple levels, including the individual, the social group, and society.
- Critically evaluate and interpret the public health scientific literature as presented in professional journals and the popular media, including descriptive, analytic, and intervention studies.
- Construct research hypotheses and design a study to test these hypotheses.
- Apply social, psychological and behavioral theory in the design, implementation, and evaluation of prevention interventions aimed toward: (a) decreasing health damaging behaviors (e.g. risky sex); (b) increasing health promoting behaviors (e.g. exercise); and (c) increasing psychosocial well-being (e.g. coping with chronic illness).
- Design an intervention aimed at changing a particular health behavior or preventing a disease.
- Develop procedures and training materials to implement effective behavioral interventions.
- Describe how culture, social inequities, and biology influence health across the lifespan.
- Identify ways to address health inequalities and promote health equity.
- Describe the appropriate statistical analyses to examine different types of research questions in the social and behavioral sciences.
- Demonstrate oral and written communication and presentation skills to effectively communicate and disseminate results to various professional and community audiences.
- Explain the dynamic interaction between policies and the social and behavioral sciences.
- Apply the ethical principles involved in social and behavioral sciences as they relate to public health.